

CALIFORNIA

OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

HOSTS AND HOSTESSES

CALIFORNIA OCCUPATIONAL GUIDE - NUMBER 500
2005

INTEREST AREA
ENTERPRISING



WHAT DO HOSTS AND HOSTESSES DO?

HOSTS AND HOSTESSES create a good impression of a restaurant by warmly welcoming guests. As restaurants' personal representatives, they serve a major role in establishing the atmosphere, ensuring meals are enjoyable, and making the surroundings inviting and comfortable for their patrons. They try to ensure that service is prompt and courteous and that the meal meets expectations. Hosts and Hostesses assign guests to tables suitable for the size of their group. Although job duties may vary, the range and scope of responsibilities depend on the establishment.

Hosts and Hostesses perform the following tasks:

- Greet guests and seat them at tables or in waiting areas.

- Provide guests with menus.
- Speak with patrons to ensure satisfaction with food and service, and to respond to complaints.
- Receive and record patrons' dining reservations.
- Plan parties or other special events and services.
- Inspect dining and serving areas to ensure cleanliness and proper setup.
- Order or requisition supplies and equipment for tables and serving stations.
- Operate cash registers to accept payments for food and beverages.
- Supervise and coordinate activities of dining room staff to ensure that patrons receive prompt and courteous service.

WHAT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT?

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities for Hosts and Hostesses include:

- Customer and Personal Service – Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Time Management – Managing one's own time and the time of others.
- Management of Personnel Resources – Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.
- Coordination – Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- Service Orientation – Actively looking for ways to help people.

- **Critical Thinking** – Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- **Oral Expression** – The ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
- **Oral Comprehension** – The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- **Number Facility** – The ability to add, subtract, multiply, or divide quickly and correctly.

WHAT'S THE WORK ENVIRONMENT?

Hosts and Hostesses work in a variety of different settings and environments, ranging from coffee shops to formal dining establishments. They are stationed at the front of the restaurant, usually between the bar and eating area, a relatively noisy environment. Therefore, they work in the midst of bar, restaurant, and entrance activity, along with ringing phones. Often music is playing. The job can be physically tiring, because the workers are required to be on their feet at all times during their shifts. The restaurant temperature is usually quite comfortable. They have adequate lighting to perform their duties, although surrounding areas may be dimly lit for atmosphere. There is some pressure involved in the work, especially when Hosts and Hostesses must maintain a smooth running operation during hectic lunch and dinner rush periods.

Some employers may provide uniforms. In some finer dining establishments, formal wear is required.

Union Membership

The primary union representing restaurant Hosts and Hostesses is the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union (AFL-CIO affiliated).

WHAT'S THE CALIFORNIA JOB OUTLOOK?

The following information is from the occupational projections produced by the Employment Development Department (EDD) Labor Market Information Division (LMID):

Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop

Estimated number of workers in 2002:	35,000
Estimated number of workers in 2012:	43,100
Projected Growth 2002-2012:	23.1%
Est. openings due to separations by 2012:	11,100

These figures do not include self-employment.

This occupation will grow faster than average compared with all occupations in California.

There will be a total of 19,200 job opportunities in this occupation during the projections period, a total of 1,920 jobs annually.

Trends

Job openings will be favorably affected by increases in population, tourism, personal incomes and leisure time. While employment growth will create many new jobs, the overwhelming majority of openings will arise from the need to replace the large number of workers who leave this occupation each year. Turnover is high for this occupation because education and training requirements are minimal, and the high number of part-time jobs is attractive to people seeking a short-term source of income rather than a career.

WHAT DOES THE JOB PAY?

California Earnings

The following information is from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey of Employers by EDD/LMID:

Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop 2005 Wages

Hourly wages range from	\$7.39	to	\$8.76
Average hourly wage	\$8.41		
Average annual wage	\$17,484		

These figures do not include self-employment.

Hours

Management typically allows Hosts and Hostesses considerable flexibility in scheduling the number of hours and shifts they will work during the week. They work anywhere from 20 to 40 hours. Hosts and Hostesses may be expected to work both day and evening shifts. Some employees work split

shifts by working a few hours during the middle of the day, taking a few hours off in the afternoon, then returning to work the evening shift. Hosts and Hostesses are expected to work some evenings, weekends, and holidays. The wide range of hours available to restaurant workers creates a good opportunity for part-time work and makes this line of work particularly suitable for homemakers and students.

Benefits

The benefits available to Hosts and Hostesses vary widely from one restaurant to the next. Most employers offer food and beverage discounts during an employee's shift. Some of the larger restaurants offer health benefit plans and vacations. A few of the larger chain restaurants offer profit-sharing plans to their employees.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE JOB?

Education and Training

Most employers prefer to train their own personnel. Other than basic on-the-job training, there are no specific training or educational requirements for Hosts and Hostesses, although many employers prefer high school graduates. However, for those interested in a career in restaurant work, there are many schools offering general and specialized programs in various restaurant occupations. The International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (listed under Other Sources of Information) offers a directory of colleges and schools offering programs in this field of work.

Licensing and Certification

There are no licensing or certification requirements for Hosts and Hostesses.

Continuing Education

There are no continuing education requirements for Hosts and Hostesses.

HOW DO I FIND THE JOB?

Jobs are located throughout the state but are typically plentiful in large cities and tourist areas.

Hosts and Hostesses are recruited through word-of-mouth from existing workers, advertisements, and employment agency referrals.

Direct application to employers remains one of the most effective job search methods. Most Hosts and Hostesses are employed in the eating and drinking places industry.

Search these **yellow page** headings for listings of private firms:

- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Resorts
- Casinos

The following Internet resources can be helpful to the job search process:

America's Career InfoNet
www.acinet.org

America's Job Bank
www.ajb.dni.us

CalJOBSSM
www.caljobs.ca.gov

Job Search and Resume Writing
www.worksmart.ca.gov/success_tips_menu.html

Local Job Service Offices
www.edd.ca.gov/jsrep/jsloc.htm

Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Online
<http://online.onetcenter.org>

One-Stop Career Centers List
www.edd.ca.gov/ONE-STOP/pic.htm

For statewide and local projections, wages, employers by county, and other occupational information go to www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov and select *Find an Occupation Profile*.

WHERE CAN THE JOB LEAD?

Job advancement for Hosts and Hostesses varies from one restaurant to the next. In restaurants where job duties are limited to greeting and seating customers, they may advance to a waiter or waitress position. In establishments where their job duties are more extensive, they may advance to dining room supervisor or restaurant manager.

Competition for jobs is usually intense at the most popular restaurants and those specializing in elegant and formal dining experiences.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The California Restaurant Association
1011 10th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(800) 765-4842
(916) 447-5793
www.calrest.org

International Council on Hotel, Restaurant,
and Institutional Education
2613 North Parham Road., 2nd Floor
Richmond, VA 23294
(804) 346-5009
www.chrie.org

Unite Here
275 7th Avenue
New York, NY 10001
(212) 265-7000
www.unitehere.org

RELATED OCCUPATIONAL GUIDES

Waiters/Waitresses	No. 42
Flight Attendants	No. 79
Dining Room Attendants (Bus Persons)	No. 523

OCCUPATIONAL CODE REFERENCES

SOC (*Standard Occupational Classification*)
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge,
and Coffee Shop 35-9031

O*NET (*Occupational Information Network*)
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge,
and Coffee Shop 35-9031.00

OES (*Occupational Employment Statistics*)
Hosts and Hostesses, Lounge, Restaurant,
and Coffee Shop 65002